



Security Council

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LETTER DATED 26 AUGUST 1996 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

With reference to document S/1996/603, concerning the deletion of items from the list of matters of which the Security Council is seized, I have the honour to communicate to you the concern of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic at the proposals made in that document, particularly that for the automatic deletion of certain matters.

In this connection, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic would like to state as follows:

1. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic strongly objects to the deletion of item 40, "Letter dated 4 February 1986 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council", which makes reference to irrefutable evidence of Israel's practice of State terrorism and of its defiance of the will of the international community as expressed in its opposition to the kind of piracy in question and its constant efforts to combat such policies.
2. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic strongly objects to the deletion of items 5 and 23, relating to the Palestine question and the Middle East problem. These items are of the utmost importance, particularly when the new Israeli Government is acting in defiance of the resolutions of the United Nations, the principle of land for peace and the will of the international community, because the issue as a whole falls within the purview of the Security Council in the context of its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.
3. It is truly regrettable that the Security Council, which bears special responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, should see fit to delete these items without heed for their objective and historical value and without prior consultation with the States concerned. We believe that this is entirely incompatible with the transparency we have all agreed to pursue in all United Nations organs as a matter of principle.



4. The retention of an item for a period of only one year if a Member of the United Nations should object to its deletion before 15 September 1996 is a norm that is unacceptable. It has been introduced without prior consultation with Member States, and it imposes on them a fait accompli in whose creation they did not participate and with regard to which they were not consulted.

5. The automatic deletion of items that have not been given formal consideration in the preceding five years shows an alarming disregard for the best way for the Council to consider certain issues and, in particular, for the timing of such consideration. It might motivate some States to insist on raising issues that would otherwise be deleted from the list of matters of which the Security Council is seized, and this might be a disservice to the work of the Council.

Lastly, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic believes that the tasks before the Security Council are much greater than any mere endeavour to simplify the list of matters of which it is seized, and it requests the Council to reconsider its decision in the interests of international peace and security.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ahmad HALLAK
Chargé d'affaires a.i.